(c) Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) has recently ordered equipment for expansion of cellular network by 1.5 lakh lines in Chhattisgarh and the capacities are expected progressively from December, 2005 onwards.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) BSNL's cellular mobile connections are likely to be available on demand in Chhattisgarh by the end of current financial year.

Microwave repeater stations

1143. SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that BSNL has around 4000 microwave repeater stations all over the country, particularly in far-flung areas;

(b) whether it is a fact that these assets became unproductive due to obsolescence technology;

(c) if so, whether these assets can be reactivated for providing umbrella coverage of upto 50 kms. for microwave and 30 kms. for cellular; and

(d) if so, the concrete steps taken to reproductivise these assets?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir. The analogue microwave equipments have reached the stage of obsolescence, but digital microwave equipments have not reached the stage of obsolescence. Further, other assets like building, tower, etc. are being utilised for other services as well as Wireless in Local Loop (WLL) and Cellular Mobile.

(c) and (d) Microwave equipments are used for point-to-point connectivity and where feasible such digital equipments are being utilized to meet the media requirement for cellular mobile connections/Wireless in Local Loop (WLL) systems.

Control of internet

1144. SHRIMATI JAYA BACHCHAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that currently the power to govern the internet rests with the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN), based in California;

(b) whether Government are contemplating to wrest control of internet on expiry of MoU in September, 2006 between ICANN and the Department of Commerce of the USA; and

(c) if so, the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) ICANN is an internationally organized, non-profit corporation that has responsibility for Internet Protocol (IP) address space allocation, protocol identifier assignment, generic (gTLD) and country code (ccTLD) Top-Level Domain name system management, and root server system management functions. As a public-private partnership, ICANN is dedicated to preserving the operational stability and security of the internet.

(b) and (c) No Sir, Government after consultation with all stakeholders have declared that Governments and all stakeholders should have effective say in all deliberations on internet policy. These should be transparent, inclusive and democratic.

Cooperation with Pakistan in I.T. sector

1145. SHRIMATI JAYA BACHCHAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have explored the possibility of cooperation with Pakistan in the field of Information Technology; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) In the Indo-Pak Bilateral Talks on Economic and Commercial Cooperation held at Islamabad during 11th-12th August, 2004, India made a special offer for full cooperation in any area of importance to Pakistan in IT sector, e-governance, e-commerce, IT enabled services.